A DECLARATION FROM THE HARMLES & INNOCENT People of GOD called QUAKERS.

Against all

Plotters and Fighters in the World.

For the removing of the Ground of Jealousie and Suspition from both Magistrates and People in the Kingdoms, concerning Wars and Fightings.

And also something in Answer to that Clause of the Kings late Proclamation, which mentions the QUAKERS, to clear them from the Plot and Fighting, which therein is mentioned, and for the clearing their innocency.

BODLEIANA BIBLIOTH.

This Declaration was given unto the King, upon the 21. day of the 7th. Month, 1660.

OUr Principle is, and our Practices have always been, to seek peace, and ensue it, and to follow after righteousness, and the knowledge of God, seeking the Good and Well-fare, and doing that which is to the peace of All. Wee know that Warres and fightings proceed from the Lusts of men, as *Jam.* 4. 1, 2, 3. of which Lusts the Lord hath redeemed us; And so out

of the Occasion of War; the Occasion of which War, and the War it self (wherein envious men, who are lovers of themselves more than lovers of God, lust, kil, & desire to have mens lives or estates) ariseth from the lust. All bloody Principles & Practises we (as to our own particular) do utterly deny, with all outward Wars, and Strife, and Fightings with outward Weapons, for any end, or under any pretence whatsoever, and this is our Testimony to the whole World.

And whereas it is objected;

But although you now say, *That you cannot Fight, nor take up Armes at all; yet if the Spirit do move you, then you will change your Principle, and then you will sell your Coat, and buy a Sword, and Fight for the Kingdom of Christ.*

Answer, As for this, we say to you, that Christ said to *Peter, Put up thy Sword in his place*: Though he had said before, he that had no Sword, might sel his Coat and buy one (to the fulfilling of the Law and Scripture) yet after when he had bid him put it up, he said, *He that taketh the Sword, shall perish with the Sword*; And further, Christ said to *Peter, Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more then twelve Legions of Angels?* And this might satisfie *Peter*, *Luk.* 22.36. after he had put up his Sword, when he said to him, *He that took it, should perish by it*, which satisfieth us, *Mat.* 26. 51, 52, 53. and in the Revelations it's said, *He that kills with the Sword, shall perish with the Sword; and here is the Faith and the Patience of the Saints*; and so Christs Kingdom is not of this World, therefore do not his Servants Fight, as he told *Pilate* the Magistrate, who crucified him: And did they not look upon Christ as a raiser of Sedition? And did not he say, *Forgive them*? But thus it is, that we are numbred amongst Transgressors, and numbred amongst Fighters, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.

That Spirit of Christ by which we are guided, is not changeable, so as once to command us from a thing as evil, & again to move unto it; And we do certainly know, and so testifie to the World, that the Spirit of Christ which leads us into all Truth, will never move us to fight and war against any man with outvvard Weapons, neither for the Kingdom of Christ, nor for the Kingdoms of this World.

First, Because the Kingdom of Christ, God will exalt according to his promise, and cause it to grow and flourish in righteousness, *not by might*, nor *by Power of outward Sword*, but by *my Spirit*, *saith the Lord*, *Zech.*4.6. So those that use any Weapon to fight for Christ, or for the establishing of his Kingdom or Government, both the Spirit, Principle and Practice in that we deny.

Secondly, And as for the Kingdoms of this World, *we cannot covet them*; much lesse can wee fight for them; but wee do earnestly desire and waite, That (by the Word of God's Power, and its effectual operation in the hearts of men) the Kingdoms of this World may become the Kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Christ, that he might Rule and Reigne in men, by his Spirit and Truth; that thereby all people out of all different Judgements and Professions, might be brought into love and unity with God, and one with another; and that they might all come to witness the Prophets words, who said, *Nation shall not lift up* Sword *against Nation*, *neither shall they learn* War *any more*, Isa. 2.4 Mich.4.3.

So we, whom the Lord hath called into the obedience of his Truth, *have denyed Wars and Fightings*, and cannot again any more learn it: And this is a certain Testimony unto all the World, of the truth of our hearts in this particular, That as God perswadeth every man's heart to believe, so they may receive it; For we have not (as some others) gone about cunningly with devised Fables: Nor have we ever denyed in Practise what we have profess'd in Principle, but in sincerity and truth, and by the Word of God have we laboured to be made manifest unto all men; that both we and our wayes might be witnessed in the hearts of all people: And whereas all manner of Evil hath been falsly spoken of us, We hereby speake forth the plain Truth of our hearts, to take away the occasion of that offence, that so we being innocent, may not suffer for other mens offences, nor be made a prey upon by the wills of men, for that of which we were never guilty; but in the uprightnesse of our hearts, we may, under the Power ordained of God, for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that

do well, live a peaceable and godly life, in all godlineſs and honeſty, for although we have alwayes ſuffer'd, and do now more abundantly ſuffer, yet we know that it's for righteouſneſs ſake; *For our rejoicing is this, the Teſtimony of our Conſciences, that in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity, not with fleſhly wiſdom, but by the Grace of God, we have had our Converſation in the world*, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. Which for us is a Witneſs, for the convincing of our Enemies. For this we can ſay to all the World, We have wronged *no mans perſon* or *poſſeſſions*, we have uſed *no force*, nor *violence againſt any man*, we have been found in *no Plots*, nor guilty of *Sedition*; when we have been wronged, we have not ſought to revenge our ſelves, we have not made reſiſtance againſt Authority; but wherein we could not obey for Conſcience-ſake, we have ſuffered even the moſt of any people in the Nation; we have been accounted as Sheepe for the ſlaughter, perſecuted and deſpiſed, beaten, ſtoned, wounded, ſtocked, whipped, impriſoned, haled out of Synagogues, caſt into Dungeons and noiſome Vaults, where many have dyed in bonds, ſhut up from our Friends, denied needful Suſtenance for many dayes together, with other the like cruelties; and the cauſe of all this our ſufferings, is not for any evil, but for things relating to the Worſhip of our God, and in obedience to his Requirings of us, *For which Cauſe wee ſhall freely give up our Bodies a ſacrifice, rather then diſobey the Lord*: For we know, as the Lord hath kept us innocent, ſo he will plead our Cauſe, when there is none in the Earth to plead it; So we in obedience unto his Truth, do not love our lives unto the death, that we may do his Will, and wrong no man in our generation, but ſeeke the Good and Peace of all men: And he that hath commanded us, *That we ſhall not ſwear at all*, Mat. 5. 34. hath alſo Commanded us, *That we ſhall not kill*, Mat. 5. So that we can neither *kill men*, nor *ſwear for, nor againſt them*. And this is both our Principle and Practiſe, and hath been from the beginning. So that if we ſuffer, as ſuſpected to take up Armes, or make war againſt any, it is without any ground from us, for it neither is, nor ever was in our hearts ſince we owned the truth of God; neither ſhall we ever do it, becauſe it is contrary to

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the Spirit of Christ, his Doctrine, and the practice of his Apostles, even contrary to him for whom we suffer all things, and endure all things.

And whereas men come against us with *Clubs, Staves, Drawn Swords, Pistols cock't*, and do *beat, cut* and *abuse us*, yet we never resisted them; but to them our Hair, Backs, and Cheeks have been ready; but it is not an honour to Manhood, nor Nobility to run upon harmless people, who lift not up a hand against them, with Arms and Weapons.

Therefore consider these things, ye men of Understanding: For Plotters, Raisers of Insurrections, Tumultuous ones, and Fighters, running with Swords, Clubs, Staves and Pistols one against another; We say, These are of the World, and hath its foundation from this Unrighteous World; from the foundation of which the Lamb hath been slain, which Lamb hath redeemed us from this unrighteous world; And we are not of it, but are Heirs of a world in which there is no End, and of a Kingdom where no corruptible thing enters: And our Weapons *are spiritual*, and *not Carnal*, yet *Mighty through God, to the plucking down of the strong holds of sin & Satan*, who is Author of *Wars, Fighting, Murder* and *Plots*; and our *Swords* are broken into *Plow-shares*, and *Spears* into *Pruning-hooks*, as Prophesied of in *Micah* 4. Therefore we cannot learn War any more, neither rise up against Nation or Kingdom with outward Weapons: though you have numbred us among the Transgressors and Plotters, the Lord knows our Innocency herein, and will plead our Cause with all Men and People upon Earth, at the day of their Judgment, when all men shall have a reward according to their works.

Therefore *in love* we warn you for your Souls good, *not to wrong the Innocent*, nor the Babes of Christ, which hee hath in his Hand, which he tenders as the Apple of his Eye; neither seek to destroy the Heritage of God; neither turn your Swords *backward*, upon such as the Law was not made for, *i. e. the Righteous*, but for the Sinners and Transgressors, to keep them down. For those are not the Peace-makers, neither the Lovers of Enemies; neither can they

they overcome Evil with Good, who wrong them that bee Friends to You, and All Men, and with Your Good, and the good of all people on the Earth. If you oppreſs us as they did the Children of *Iſrael* in *Egypt*; and if you Oppreſs us as they did when *Chriſt* was born, & as they did the Chriſtians in the Primitive times, we can ſay, *The Lord forgive you*; & leave the Lord to deal with you, and not Revenge our ſelves. And if you ſay as the Council ſaid to *Peter* and *John*, *You muſt ſpeak no more in that Name*; and if you ſerve us as they ſerved the *Three Children*, ſpoken of in *Daniel*, God is the ſame as ever he was, that lives for ever and ever, who hath the Innocent in his Arms.

Oh Friends! offend not the Lord, and his *Little Ones*; neither afflict his People; But conſider, and be moderate, and do not run haſtily into things, but mind, and conſider *Mercy*, *Juſtice*, and *Judgment*; that is the way for you to proſper, and get the favour of the Lord. Our Meetings were ſtopped and broken up in the daies of *Oliver*, in pretence of Plotting againſt him; and in the daies of the *Parliament*, and *Committee of Safety*, wee were looked upon as Plotters to bring in KING CHARLES; and now we are called Plotters againſt KING CHARLES. Oh that men ſhould loſe their Reaſon, and go contrary to their own Conſcience, knowing that we have ſuffered all things, and have been accounted Plotters all along, though we have declared againſt them both by word of mouth and Printing, & are clear from any ſuch things, though we have ſuffered all along becauſe we would not take up Carnal Weapons to fight withall againſt any; and are thus made a prey upon, becauſe we are the Innocent Lambs of Chriſt, and cannot avenge our ſelves. Theſe things are left upon your Hearts to conſider. But we are out of all thoſe things, in the patience of the Saints, and we know, that as Chriſt ſaid, *He that takes the Sword ſhall periſh with the Sword*, Mat. 26.52. Revel. 13.10.

This is given forth from the People called Quakers, *to ſatisfie the* King *and His* Council, *and all thoſe that have any Jealouſie concerning Us, that all occaſion of Suſpition may be taken away, and our Innocency cleared.*

Given

Given forth under our Names, & in the behalf of the whole body of the Elect People of God, who are called *Quakers*.

George Fox	*Gerrard Roberts*	*Henry Fell*
Rich. Hubberthorn	*John Bolton*	*John Hinde*
John Stubbs	*Leonard Fell*	*John Furley, jun.*
Francis Howgill	*Samuel Fiſher*	*Thomas Moor.*

POSTSCRIPT.

THough we are numbred with Plotters in this late Proclamation, *and put in the midſt of them, and numbred amongſt Tranſgreſſors; and ſo have been given up to all rude, mercileſs men, by which our Meetings are Broken up, in which we edified one another in our holy Faith, and praied together to the Lord that lives for ever, yet he is our pleader for us in this Day; the Lord ſaith,* They that feared his Name, ſpoke often together, *as in* Malachy, *which were as his Jewels: And for this cauſe, and no Evil-doing, are we caſt into Holes, Dungeons, Houſes of Correction, Priſons; they ſparing neither old nor young, men nor women; and juſt ſold to all Nations, and made a prey to all Nations, under pretence of being Plotters, ſo that all rude people run upon us to take poſſeſſion; for which we ſay, The Lord forgive them that have thus done to us, who doth, and will enable us to ſuffer; And never ſhall we lift up a hand againſt any man that doth thus uſe us: But that the Lord may have Mercy upon them, that they may conſider what they have done: For how is it hardly poſſible for them to requite us, for the wrong they have done to us? Who to all Nations have ſounded us abroad as Plotters, who were never found Plotters againſt any Power or Man upon the Earth, ſince we knew the life and power of Jeſus Chriſt manifeſted in us; who hath redeemed us from the world, and all works of Darkneſs, and Plotters that be in it; by which we know our Election before the world began. So we ſay, The Lord have mercy upon our Enemies, and forgive them, for that they have done unto us.*

Oh!

Oh doe as you would be done by; and do unto [illegible] men [illegible] would have them do unto you, for this is but the Law and [illegible] Prophets.

And all Plots, Insurrections and Riotous meetings we do deny [illegible] deeds of darkness, knowing them to be of the Divel the murther[illegible] which we in Christ, which was before they were, triumph over th[illegible] & all Wars & Fightings with Carnal weapons we do deny, who h[illegible] the Sword of the Spirit: And all that wrong us, we leave them [illegible] the Lord; and this is to clear our Innocencie from that Asper[illegible] cast upon us, That we are Plotters.

NOtwithstanding our publication of this, is in [illegible] no other end, but nakedly for the clearing of our In-nocency; yet such hath been the apparent maliciousness [illegible] such as are in present Power in this City, that rather th[illegible] our Innocency and Integrity should be understood by th[illegible] people, who through lying Accusations are prejudiced [illegible] gainst us, have done what in them lay, to prevent its ro[illegible] ing forth to publike view, by a violent and unjust taking [illegible] way the whole first Impression.

THE END.

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